

August 18, 2006



Chairpersons, Regional Transportation Commission

Dear Commission Chairs,

The City of Kirkland is pleased to comment on your governance questions raised in the August 1, 2006 letter from Linda Robson. This response is consistent with our previous policy direction, our goals for mobility, and our role in previous regional transportation forums.

We fully support your efforts to review the current state of governance for regional and local transportation. Our comments are not intended as criticisms of any current staff or organizations delivering services to the region. Our experience with the staff, boards, and services of regional and local transportation officials is marked by professionalism, pride and good customer service. Noted below are some principles and outcomes for assessing alternate regional governance structures.

Principles:

Eliminate redundant decision-making processes. Our attempts to attain regional consensus, combined with lack of funds to move forward, have created scenarios like the one surrounding SR 520. Several years ago, consensus was reached after a multiple-year TransLake Washington process, yet those decisions have had to be revisited in subsequent processes.

Ensure fully integrated transit planning and service delivery. Our region is fortunate to have quality transit agencies. Their services to the public should continue to be seamless and highly integrated. Fares, schedules, route planning and operations should be coordinated such that the result is a regional transit system including rail, busses, bus rapid transit and van pools.

Coordinated public outreach to clarify agency's responsibilities Between city municipal transportation departments, WSDOT, various transit agencies, Sound Transit, state ferries, state rail, and the array of advisory bodies, it is sometimes unclear which agency is responsible for which portion of the transportation infrastructure.

Should the Commission recommend restructure, simplify structure wherever possible. Any change in the existing regional governance structure should build upon and or consolidate existing entities, while seeking simplification wherever possible. Specific recommendations relative to structure should also utilize information from other successful models around the country.

Continue local control over local streets. Cities have incorporated or annexed based on the citizen's desire for accountability and representation. Any reform should continue to allow cities to maintain their system, provide transportation services, and respond to citizen issues. In the

interest of highlighting accountability, look at requiring each city to report annually on Level of Service, Pavement conditions, non-



motorized trail completion, etc. This would allow for a comprehensive report on local street networks and services.

Regardless of structure, empower one agency to produce an annual ‘Report on the Regional Transportation Network’. This report would let citizens know the status of whole transportation network. It would combine construction activity, completed projects, system enhancements, performance measures from the freeways and mass transit systems, and other information for the public to know how the entire system is performing. It would also communicate that we are taking a comprehensive review of the system, and demonstrate how each agency’s projects are part of the larger mobility and public service vision. Information from cities could be included in this report. This regional report would also include a chart to educate the public on the origin and destination of all taxpayer/ratepayer payments to the transportation network. It would show which taxes go to which agency, and what products that agency is producing for the public. The premise of this report is to demonstrate the public cost of mobility, and the annual benefits to the citizens.

Take adequate time to implement any structural changes. There is currently significant planning, design and construction activity in the region. I-405, SR 520, Alaskan Way Viaduct, SR 167, SR 99, Light Rail, Park and Rides, and other projects are moving forward. Any new structure must be looked at carefully, with enhancement in the delivery of existing projects as a key criterion for selection.

Regardless of structure, insure mass transit, non-motorized and alternative modes compete favorably for funds. While we realize businesses and the economy depend upon the subsidy to roads, freeways and freight mobility, we also recognize that walking, biking, and transit must take on a larger share of trips. Recent reports on the health benefits of walking and biking, the rising cost of fuel, and the automobile’s contribution to climate change may require that we all take more dramatic steps to shift to transit and non-motorized travel.

Insure that transportation network enhances and serves designated Urban Centers. Our state and region has done great work supporting urban density and protecting rural areas. This priority should continue with future transportation investments serving Urban Centers.

Insure continued partnerships with transit agencies, local governments, and the private sector produce Transit-Oriented Development. Development and land use is one of the primary determinants of the mode of travel. Transit-Oriented Development should be a high priority for funding and partnership projects.

Regardless of governance and structure, continue to support significant alternative mode projects like the Eastside BNSF rail corridor acquisition. This initiative by King County should be supported and enhanced with whatever changes occur in regional governance. This

project has the potential to link growing east side cities, urban centers and neighborhoods with a critical non-motorized corridor. In the long-term future, there is also the possibility for rail connections along this corridor.



These are but a few of our comments based on our local decision-making in Kirkland and in our participation in several regional forums. We would like to note again that we believe our region and state benefit from the professionalism and dedication of the individuals currently providing transportation services in the various organizations.

In accordance with your request, we have attached a document that describes the City of Kirkland's transportation funding. To conclude, we appreciate the opportunity to comment, and look forward to further opportunities to participate. In addition, the City of Kirkland would like to address the Regional Transportation Commission on August 24th.

Sincerely,
Kirkland City Council

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James L. Lauinger".

James L. Lauinger
Mayor

Attachments: City of Kirkland Funding Charts



City of Kirkland Transportation Funding Charts

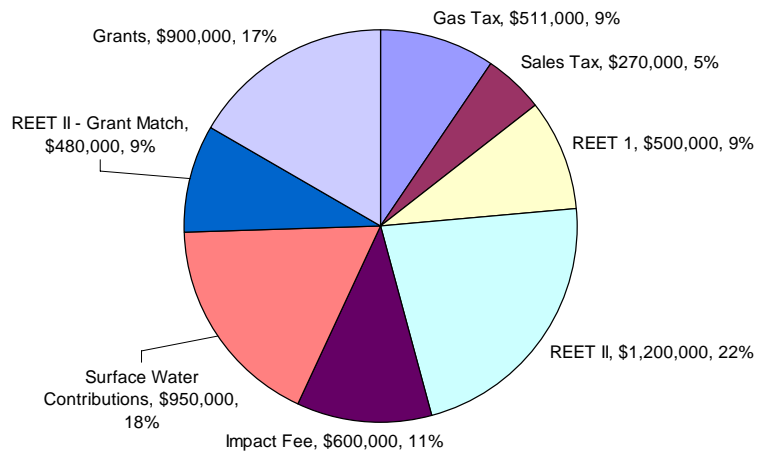
The attached charts for the City of Kirkland show that on average, the city spends \$5.4 M annually on capital projects, and \$4.1 M annually on operations and maintenance of the transportation network. The annual budget for transportation in the City of Kirkland is \$9.4 M per year. Of this amount, approximately 9% is from state and federal grants, 12% is from the City's share of gas tax, and the remaining 79% is from local sources.

These investments do not include transportation projects completed in Kirkland by other agencies like Sound Transit, WSDOT and others. For example, WSDOT is constructing improvements to the I 405 corridor in Kirkland, funded by the 'Nickel' program and the Transportation Improvement Account. In addition, WSDOT and Sound Transit are building HOV access ramps at NE 128th Street at the Totem Lake Urban Center. In addition, Sound Transit will be constructing transit improvement projects at NE 85th Street and will build a Downtown Transit Center by 2010. In addition, Kirkland residents benefit from other regional projects by Sound Transit, WSDOT and King County's Metro Transit not within our immediate boundaries.

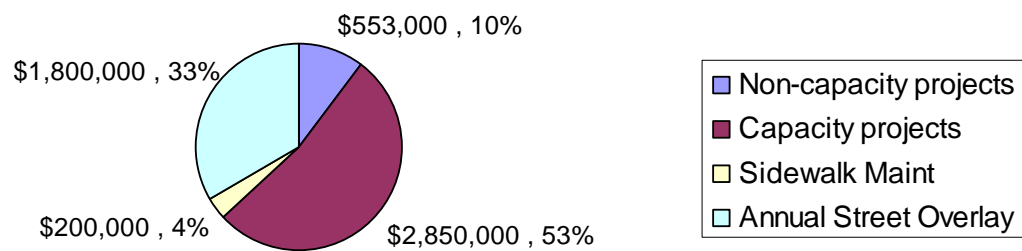
See the attached charts for more specific information.



City of Kirkland Capital Transportation Revenues - \$5.4 M



City of Kirkland Transportation Annual Capital Expenses \$5.4 M





City of Kirkland Transportation Operating Revenues - \$4.1m

This revenue supports roadway maintenance, traffic control devices, street cleaning, street lights, medians, pedestrian paths, traffic calming, and other infrastructure.

